SECESSION IN ASTROPOLIS

by

EUGENE JOLAS

THE BLACK SUN PRESS
RUE CARDINALE
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To My Brother, Jacques.

SECESSION IN ASTROPOLIS

AND twilight dreamdrooms rosily over the world. Soon night will unleash its thousand monsters, mysteries will flishflash through the hours, the wonderful will be resurrected by sacerdotal hands. I walk alone into the hallucinated walls. My fever seeks Eden in the tumbletimble of the houses. Where is the messenger of the miraculous spaces ?

He waits for me in a distant part of the huge city. He leaves his house, in the wilderness of the gas-lanterns, he wanders beneath the greening arches, he holds the demons in leash, when loneliness burns into a gentle insanity. From the dusk-ridden asphalt his wand of silver brings forth the electric fays and he builds the fabulous museum, where the obsessions hold their feast-day.

The streets drink dust so thirstily. Is that his voice that keeps on whispering fables about the

philosopher's stone, about the dark tears of panic, about the beings that hurt our duskiness ? Will he bring a crepuscular sonata into the brambles of our bruises, he who heard so much elysian music ? Our loney words slink like alley-cats to arid walls. We roam through lianae of seraphic wonderings.

I arrive at his attic, but Lillittoo has left the place where he was watching a spider occupying itself with black witcheries. Ideograms of silk shuttered the last gleam of the sun. They read :

"Blooted heart wines in its solitude. Mangles the earth in a shrillshrall of chains. Nothing is here that hides death from the embrace of the savage children.

"The world is too meager. Over the macadam-fields the winds cry requiem. Legends organ with thorning pilgrimages. It is still thunder. The leaves ice on the boulevards. The dresses court. Blooted heart wines at the edge of the rivering ache.

"I will run from idyls of decay."

But where is he hidden, hawk of the roofs ? Dusk grows so sclerotic my hands begins to shake. I shall send him special delivery letters across avenues, across skyscrapers, across leaves, across court-yards, across zoos, across metaphysics of midnight. Will he then come ? Nothing can keep me in the miasma of the bonfired room.

The landlady quarrels with her son-in-law. A hunting-horn wails. Couples laugh metallically in rooms. A stranger hostils walls. Goldhair floods the nape of a girl. Someone is stricken by wonder.

What is it spiders weave in the last glint of the sun ? White glow of steel. Passion at peace. Nearness. Can anyone know how this moment's shadow, this word's approximation ? Mute voices stir. Jest.

I have a violin in my head blooming like a nettle. Well-being is in my head. Frontiers will crash down. The luminous chronicles will reveal the alliances that have been waiting for me since my birth. And he is hidden in the jungle of the world, Lillittoo is hidden...

And I shall shut my eyes and I shall walk with him through the most tremendous cities.

* * *

Such is the nocturne in its babbling of enchantments. The world is altogether ripe with insurrection. We will demolish it to find ourselves blooming into miracles. We will burn it down to discover the hieroglyphs hidden in its foundation.

I have listened to dialogues sinister and bleak. I have watched hampelmen clipclap in saw-dust.

I have seen them swollen in their pride. I have heard them clucking in their joy.

Une ombre se penche devant mes yeux. Explosions will rock the beams and visions will loom. Manifestoes will flutter from the roofs, the goddess of electricity will be carried through the streets on rose-suckled chariots, the individualism of fools will be declared treason. O les cris déchirés des oiseaux ! Des mots d'acier s'abattront sur les villes. Les accents du carnaval ronfleront comme des avions.

Night blossoms into songs of blood. The station waits for geographic revolutions. Schwaelen werden nicht mehr an unsern Hueften kranken. Unser Siechtum wird vorueber sein. Who will bring us news of cities and seas, of capes of hope and steamers, of Caribbean islands and fruits stranger than dreams ?

I walk and I remember the sonata played on an afternoon of sun, when I was very new before life and there was in me a waiting for miracles. I remember America, paradise of magnificent barbarians, monsters, aztecs, and its decay in pale words. In my heart I carry memories of France, memories of rituals before the Crucifix. I remember many languages millnilling in my ears. I remember my father taking me to the city for the first time, the gleaming city with a

cathedral like a terrapin's back. I remember lonely days in a roaring welter of steel, when night was no longer a friend.

But everything sinks into a narcotic forgetting, and I follow a basilisk through the desert of stone. Where do you take me, searer of atoms, destroyer of ensembles, when the hours have guttered into enigmas?

Mme Brahe waits with orphic fingers. Despair dies in a crackle of burnt wings. I am a mesmerized wanderer through cool gardens. (O gentle dreamer, o weaver of necromancy, murmuring woman, your mind destroys the roar of the subway and the misery of men!) The contours of the minutes grow misty. In the forest of alchemy she glides through silences, where pity is no longer a mission of decay and where the bird-jaguars crunch the bones of the unknown. Her eyes cry into the conspiracy of the spheres. In provocative rage she destroys the institutions of the dull of mind and creates the supernatural glories reserved for the men of the moon.

Sometimes I saw her shuddering with the agony of her visions. In the dim room, where bric-à-brac was heaped up and where the parrot croaked its interminable maledictions, I watched her in the indolence of my hunger. Sometimes she saw the demons celebrating their festivals.

She penetrated into the past and future and grew weary of men. And then she smiled and before her unrolled the jest of the universe. The stars laughed with her and the planets had nothing better to do than to whirl around and to dance to a crazy air of Thule.

A voice comes out of the gathering night with echoes of fat prairies and tenement houses and slavery and assassinations. Machines clickclack over the tedium of the hours. In my mind there are still innumerable cries from hospitals and prisons and asylums. I hear the wail of the disinherited.

Mme Brahe waits with orphic fingers. In her room she hides behind dark curtains from the eyes of the trackers. There she brews her magic. The gates of the wonderful are wide open. Mist hovers over the nightscape. Migratory words clink multi-colored through the silence. A world is born fabulous before my eyes.

Night opens with phantasmagoria. Where is the labyrinth that leads us into ourselves? My death is still far away. I do not believe in my death. Time is abrogated. I am enveloped in a metamorphosis. O fusion of probabilities : The elements are dissociated.

Mme Brahe reads my hands. Mme Brahe plays with cards. Mme Brahe sinks into a trance.

Plumbago. The affair will go well for you, but listen to the advice of a sage. Panther before a mirror. A woman will stride across your path and ensnare your heart. Flowers. Beware of too much hunger of the senses. Everything you have done has ended in nothingness. You have thrown away the ripe fruits and stood stunned before the rotting ones. A crisis waits for you. A crisis waits for you. There will be many changes. Life will be very gentle to you. Gemini. Later on. Neptune. Your prison will be flung open. Galvanised your spirit. Magnificent anarchy.

I am in the streets again. Paved with gold they are. Times Square glows into a kermesse. A Brooklyn steel-mill echoes with music. Place Vendome is filled with unicorns prancing to an invisible rhythm. Department stores shake with the dance of flitterfluttering harlequins. Men slink into gorillas. Women are celestial beings of fire.

Where is Lillittoo? Many mile-stones have rolled in back of me since last I saw him. Always the mechanical hours grew phantasmal in his presence.

Luna Island lies in the irradiation of acetylene. Carrousels swingring. The lindau vaults. Dance-halls open up the glittering world of a puppet-

show. The sea washes up submarine secrets. Flotsam of the most bewitching color reveals the floory of the oceanic mountains and valleys. The swimmers lie stupefied before riddles. And popular music creakcroaks in the crystal air. Love-tales organ ecstasy. It is so moony in the dim recesses of the Russian Mountains. Monstrous beings frightfrooss the spectators who hide their shivering nerves behind innocuous words.

I walk like a somnambulist. I walk very loney in the glare of the lights. The crowd reeks and rooks and envelops me in the gloor of its whimpeling. I am against the sweating arm-pits. I am against the willwill wool of their glances. Automatic bodies pass by on stilts.

Lillittoo comes up and laughs. His laughter rocks and racks the tar-babies.

"Where have you been?" I ask.

"In Roolooloo and Troolooloo," he says and dances a pirouette.

* * *

"The corporeal," he continues, "fell from me as I left the Woolworth-Eiffel Tower on the aerobus *Hopsassa*. It was very spring and the girls were out for trouble. The city-lights became misted, as the ether cracked asunder and my disembodied microcosm shot into space. Brooklyn

Bridge strung pearls. The Seine flung fire. The Moulin du Soleil flamed bloot. Long Island slurred into a wash. Colombey-les-2-Eglises gurred blue. Setauket gold. Aeons.

"Falsterbo, my pilot, knew the way.

"I heard a visionary whirring around the plane. Voices became tangled and I caught at last the invocation :

Leelillee doom roombala
Singsongsing mooraldabay
Flingflang toor bramoomdala
Fraltapha o shalleeblay

Astranalla Sangaboo
Feedle lingus bungador
Hoolilana hoolooloo
Brinkabrank halunkamor

"I came past a field of blue where scarlet fish were dancing in the electric light. They reminded me of certain men I had abominated on earth. They appeared to be burning up with hatred. Their eyes popped out like those of a Maya divinity, and they emitted maroon sparks that flickered over the grass. The trees were enveloped in a thick haze of rain mist. Out of their branches came fluttering a multitude of insects. Their bodies were hybrid in shape. Some looked like miniature leopards with wings. Others

apparently presented a combination of exotic vegetable and some thousand-legged creature escaped from a botanist's drum.

"The thing that struck me exceedingly was the color of the air around the field. It was a deep yellow and flaked like smoke. Occasionally I heard a hissing sound, as if steam were being released from a locomotive funnel. Sometimes, too, there was a clingelingeling like the echo of a mazda belt. It seemed to me several times that I heard the honking of an automobile horn, although there was no sign of any ordinary mechanical life. I decided I must be suffering from auditory hallucinations.

"Then out of the yellow flakes there roared a metallic voice. I was stunned. It was sharp and almost offensive. I looked for it behind yellow pines clustered at the edge of the field. I raced around the place getting my feet entangled in a flaming heap of bindweed in which I noticed a lizard with a silk hat on its horny head. It stared at me with shillering eyes and whined. I ran away. Then I came to a garden in the shape of a hypothenuse. It was planted with rose-wine and eggle-berries, all of them running about in a wild confusion. Their fruits were luscious like Oregon apples and their leaves seemed to burn like incandescent light. The voice continued its

rilling sound. It was becoming more and more derisory.

"I sat down on a heap of sand and waited. The sensation of being near a mystery became stronger every minute. I watched a lion-goat gamboling around the field. Its udder was more cobalt than a Paris dusk. From time to time big, long-legged animals, evocative of magnified spiders, came rushing up with pails, milked the lion-goat and dashed off again.

"My idyl was suddenly interrupted by a violent gust of wind. I looked up and saw one of the most extraordinary beings I had ever beheld. Half man, half buffalo, it seemed to have crept from out of the ground. I felt distinctly how the grass had given way, how the rotating motion had caught my neurones, and how the eerie being fought its way into the yellow light. I did not dare breathe. Something like horror came over me.

"The buffalo-man slunk near. That sound I had heard before was still audible, ant it undoubtedly came from him. His ventriloquist power was terrifying. He looked at me. He looked at me with liquid eyes, with eyes that, however, were strangely soft and kind. I felt more confidence. He began to talk. This is the story he told me :

" 'Abyssblue hossanaaed into spring. Platonics stood horizontal song. I lingered in a sassaslab.

" 'It was so alcohol. The train had shrillspilled many days and my speculations riped through the wooland woole. But was it real ? Rags swickered glore. My hunger fleeried pale. My zenith shambled in collapse of dances and flew with locomotives into the orifice of the sun.

" 'The world has buised my porphories. Long have I rumored midnightly in the blizzard's atlas. Where were you then, my gate and grace ? I was yumlying in the querulous track. Heavy was my sleep o near one so distant one in mathematics. Will you ever know the silences sherroring into the silver silversoole ? Haalowy your languories dear fernroots in the cloam o the glow and the glew.

" 'I langed. I drank her eyes. It was very cool the flash of her hairscape. She was not alone. A signal loopswooped to the galley. The minutes lozanged down. I saw her turbilling in flight. Her hands were shoum. Her face burnt road. A mineral glooed in her eyes. She turned so very vegetable.

" 'A greygreen skoon clank runk. An echo wrapped me in my trek. The tale sank stupefiant Roolatingama buised lilylums.'

"Already the aerobus began to propeller, as I caught his last words and we were off into the

new dimension. Before my eyes there was a vista of landscapes : fire-red mountains, white forests, crystal caves, maroon acres, skyscrapers of marcipan in red, blue, gold and white.

"A comet flashed by, stopped, winked at us, and went on its way, probably to destroy the section of the earth I had just left. I sent my best wishes back to the wonderful machine which emitted a swathe of steam in violet colors.

"Roaring through space at a speed exceeding by trillions of miles the limits set on the miserable planet below, we suddenly felt around us a shrill sound, an orchestral sound, that was very lovely. I was unable to distinguish any of the instruments used in this production, but whatever they were they had undoubtedly no equivalent among the tiresome instruments I had known before. They slashed the air which by now had changed into a shimmering gold with scimitars of steel. They crashed with a rhythm so fast that the aerobus was shaken and the pilot's hands trembled before the controller. The most marvellous quality about this music was the fact that it was not only a vast conglomeration of sounds, but that it also let surge forth the most buntboont colors I had ever seen. Here there were textures such as the weirdest imagination had never envisaged. There were new colors the names of which I did

not know, but which whirled into my orbit with the scattering of atoms.

"We landed on Trilunaa a few minutes later. Here we saw little women with green hair and wide yellow mouths. Their dresses were of the flimsiest material and very colorful. They received us with much singing and songing.

"Another planet greeted us, after we had voyaged again through the interplanetary ether. It was called Pantapla. A being, half root, and half man, greeted us. Around a green camp-fire we sat for a long time listening to extraordinary recitals of sagas and love-stories. I remember one :

" 'and and and she came auriferous langlanging down dawn she was and were in the milk of the cityraar in the ringroor of the willakoo.

" 'you art to me and mine art thou a snow-white page but no art thou and thine not those and me a silent violin string at duskiness an evening prayer at rosiness art mine the earth asleep at mooniness dreamsolitude we are thou art a naked wildblossom belling for a baal.

" 'she swingswaled low he febered dark whirl without and and and and she was so vitzlipuztli were her she so thighyblond in all the nightness of his mourn she festivaled staravenues with she burst the stone burnt she a gloria did she victoria

she distanced off into a mist into she wheatfields falbing in the sun and drank into october silences were did she then o mute his slumbering.

"' a hat upon the beach it was frivering so much it much it was were it not missouring down a word a telegram and never and and her hair floated flat in roseys and in troutrelles so loney before a god and and she was tears so tears was she tears red the blood stood still the midnight clingmourned tears and and and and and and '....

"The aerobus brought us at reduced speed to a planet which my pilot explained was called Roongataa. Here I found the little men of the twelfth dimension. All the four sexes were represented there. The men had eight ears and were clad in straw. The women had three ears each and sported palm-leaves around their legs. All other parts of their body were bare. The men-women and the women-men were completely nude. On a sloping meadow in which grew grass of a violent scarlet color they busied themselves with the strangest occupations. Their bodies were musical. A constant humming, as of innumerable bees, echoed from their breasts and legs. When you touched one of them, they turned into little songs which later translated themselves into colors of a nerve-caressing quality.

"My pilot spoke to them, but I was unable to

understand a word. In fact, it was not words they pronounced, but mere sounds, very lovely ones evocative of music boxes.

"We were led to a kind of temple which stood away from the field facing their little village. All the houses were of glass and shone in the gentle twilight color of the sky. The temple was constructed of sharply polished crystal. Here we were received in state and were given to eat and drink. The food consisted of square fruits called lalla. Their taste was unlike anything I had ever experienced : it was sweet and acid at the same time and one of its characteristics was a bewildering perfume that enveloped us as in a cloud. This made you imagine timeless things. The liquid served in tiny bowls had the color of quicksilver. It steamed and you suddenly saw a movement of girlish feet before you, copper sticks beat a clattering rhythm to the flash of ankles, a delirium gripped your senses.

"The walls of the temple were almost too dazzling for my eyes. They had many inscriptions, evidently scratched with diamonds, revealing the most baffling ideographs. I wrote down some of them :

Omiraalo
X-Z-Y
Oladoor

Omsissis
Groo
OO
Aer
Tri
Tro
Lo
Hal
Hool
Heel
XZY

* * *

"On Boomboola which was our next stop we found ourselves in a half-light. The frontiers were invisible. A heavy purplish mist, interspersed with little sharp flashes, fluted around the darkness. Glow-worms flirred about and chanted.

"Miraculous animals emerged from the diluvian gloom. There were magnificent combinations of species, many of them were unknwon to me. They were able to talk and their speech had a quiet melodic line.

"I was unable to understand their words, but from their gestures I gathered that they wanted us to follow them. Through a valley which was stacked with corn and the slopes of which were hung with vines, we walked until we came to a

little house built into a rock. It was wreathed with tropical-looking flowers, and as we entered there rang a bell with the most rapturous timbre.

"Our animal companions stopped before a tremendous door of silver. We heard a faint chanting coming from the room. It opened. There lay the loveliest girl I had ever seen. A halo shimmered supernaturally around her head and was so flaming that I feared she must be burning up. Her lips were blue streaked with carmine and trembled a bit with excitement. Suddenly she opened her arms and there appeared a little being no bigger than her own hand. It was a girl already matured in appearance.

"The child began to talk to us. Rhythmic sounds plappered in our ears. Someone told us that her name was Lunalina.

* * *

"While I was still filled with the enchantment of what I had seen, the aerobus started on another trip. Space no longer disturbed me. We landed on the planet Sirrala, where we found ourselves before an endless steppe of flower-trees the names of which, my pilot told me, were rosaringias and coocootubes. Their perfume was so intense that I felt like fainting several times.

"Suddenly I heard a whir of wings, as if

hundreds of propellers were fanning the air. A giant being stood before me, clad in a bathing suit of steel. He had three eyes, his feet were not unlike those of a leopard's, and his hands could reach to the top of the coocootube near him.

"He took us to an observatory built of purest gold. There we were able to watch the earth and its minutest actions through curiously shaped glasses which magnified everything a thousand-fold. The spectacle was quite nauseating. Not only the concrete actions of human beings were visible from this height, but their secret thoughts were also graphed upon maps hanging on the walls.

"I saw the hatred that lies beneath everything men do. I saw their hypocrisy and mendaciousness. I saw the cities tremble in the tumult of their false dawns. I saw madness creep like slime over acres and villages. I saw the blood of the murdered men and animals.

"World-loathing seized me.

"But I also saw — o wonder, wonder ! — an occasional love reach gentle hands into the universe.

* * *

"We voyaged through the ocean of the air. A drifting population of the most extraordinary beings swept by us in stupefying columns. The

most luminous beings, apparently disembodied, flished past, leaving a trail of light behind them.

"Suddenly I felt myself dying. I felt death approach calmly and beautifully. Unconscious I glided into silence. And what I then saw and experienced I shall tell you some other time....

"I awoke in a landscape of necromantic splendor. I grew paralysed with joy. Someone stood over me and looked at me. It was a beautiful woman dressed in white. Was it she who had resurrected me? I did not have time to reflect much about it, for from some part of the place there came a voice which recited a poem. Two stanzas I remember still :

" 'Angelic mages wing and fling the lieder
The fli-fli-flambuli rides many a flag
Infinity plays calmly rig-rig-rag
Der Uhu-Adler streichelt sein Gefieder

The angels hold the miracles and balm
O fli o flo o halli hooli ooo
They stand upon their heads and hitchikoo
And ride the gnut and howl a magic psalm'

"So this was the joyous planet of the night. The twentieth dimension which I had been dreaming about all my life was reached at last. The great adventure loomed. It was the planet Laamamoo that had seen my resurrection.

"I said this was the planet of the night. But that is merely an elliptical expression I had retained from the earth. The luminousness of Sirilla is reflected below in such a way as to affect the nerves of people to the point of a crisis.

"As a child I remember wondering about paradise. I now thought this planet oudid the most feverish imagining. It rang with constant music. The trees clingglangged and witched. Like clavecins. The winds composed songs without interruption. The animals had rhythmically sounding furs. Rivers murmured music-hall ditties.

"Men and women were tall and ethereal of bearing. They walked with their heads in the air. Their eyes were almost always closed. Their gestures were magnificently cadenced. Their movements, often abrupt almost to the point of absurdity, seemed to follow some inner rhythm, a kind of somnambulist rhythm which filled me with sacred horror. I noticed that all of them were asleep and were acting either under the demoniac impulses of nightmares or the genteel beauty of dreams. I watched with much amusement how a few suddenly climbed trees and remained suspended in the leafage, while others, evidently exchanging, in their unconscious state, the roles of actor and observer,

were engaged in struggles, muscular and verbal.

"What struck me particularly was the absolute freedom from prudish inhibitions in their love-life. Passion thus became a normal thing that could find its expression anywhere at will.

"After a while I noticed that some of the men appeared to be much disturbed. They flocked around a big-bodied chap who had been holding himself aloof from the rest. Truega and his friends were hideously ugly and misshapen. Hunchbacks, hydrocephalics, men with goiters, cripples, old men with cancer-eaten faces, and others with similar deformations. In their eyes there blazed sinister hate.

"I was walking about on the silver roads, when I suddenly heard a clattering of mitrailleuses. The crystal cosmos slingered nerves. I looked up and saw Truega and his ragged herd galloping against a column of steel which had been drawn up on the other side of the plain. Click aud clack. Steel on steel. The hideous army was soon scattered. Some of them were hurled into space and landed on the earth, where, I understand, they are today parading their mutilations as literateurs. Others were captured to be put to death. It was curious to see their bloodless faces, their arid hands, their rotting, flesh and muscles, as they were being led through the

plain. Some had their heads cut off. The flesh of others was being devoured by enormous dogs. Cartileges crunched. Clippering and clappering accompanied the hanging of others.

O beautiful dementia of the spirits in sleep!

"Then dew fell healing over the planet. The Laamamoolites stood silent, and then began to build the Miracle City : Astropolis. Thousands of engineers groped and grept. These men with big heads on little undersized bodies were evidently a special race. Demons shook them and their obsessed beings acted under the whip of some mystic impulsions. As soon as a group of workers had finished their part of labor, they voluntarily went to a hill nearby, where they committed suicide by jumping into an electric lake.

"Immense frescoes of a grotesque humor were placed in a building made of heavy glass. It had two hundred stories which rose with vertiginous rapidity. The workers, instinctively following some subtle geometric law, placed the glass-blocks like puzzles together and hoisted many pillars to the heights. In the flanks of precipices they built beautiful, fortresslike houses, evidently planned as the dwelling of the population.

"Glass was the only material used in all these constructions. How it glittered and glitzered and shillered in the light!

"Then there followed a kermesse the splendor of which it is difficult for me to describe. Looklila, the feminine dictator, was carried in triumph through the streets in a wagon of beaten gold. The fête started a barbaric beauty of color and music began and every organic and inorganic being rang rhythmically like bells.

"Nude young girls danced around the gallows of the vanquished who were bumbling on ropes of steel. Laamamool musicked into a dementia. Infinity blew by on resonant wings. Everybody was whirled into a magnificent, universal rhythm, everybody became interchangeable.

"Insect-men from other planets arrived in swarms filling the air with hurraing and hussaing. A contest was held between them and a small army of young Laamamoolites to find out which was more deft in the handling of the machines which Looklila had released for the occasion. Giant motor cars flew through the air at break-neck speed, some of the insect-men rushed by on electric stilts, their opponents roared over the glass-roofs on monstrous skates, airplanes climbed through trees and hopped about among the branches.

"Other machines were demonstrated—symphonies in stala, a metal which was related, I was told, to silver, and which glinted with bewildering

splendor. We heard the broom-broom of a machine and suddenly the public depots were filled with hot bread brought there by the monstrous arms of the new invention. Another machine made of platinum and revealing the silhouette of a locust began to participate in the work. The air was filled with the most toothsome smell of cooking. Automatically fried pigeons and other viands fluttered through the air and landed deftly on long tables on a public square.

"The banquet lasted what seemed to me a week. A wine was served, of light-green color, which did not intoxicate, no matter how much you drank, but which intensified your emotions to the point of necromancy, and which caused you to have the most gorgeous hallucinations.

"Looklila rose and spoke :

" 'Fire-serpent dead is dead. Alone we stand we o we stand now in light. Astropolis my own ! Ring- ring-ringing we will rise to the new astronomy of fire and eternity. Hopla !'

"I looked up and suddenly there rose over the ecstatic faces of the astropolites a golden haze. Out of the ether there emerged a tremendous form, dim at first ; then, as it became silhouetted, we saw a gigantic bird, the size of a fifty-story house, its wings flooming like propellers.

" 'Filigram, the bearer of the future,' murmured those present, and fell on their knees.

" 'Filigram soared for a while over the Glass City, his wings glinting magically in the light, and then he dropped down delicately upon the roof of the Miracle Tower. He began to sing. His voice was more ravishing than a million nightingales. It sang interplanetary folk-songs about the life and death of Roompheelus, the conqueror of Laamalool, thus omening a thousand years of musiclight.

"Something looled and lalled in me, as a hymnal cry rose from millions of throats.....

EXPRESS

MYSTERIOUS fingers shake the atlas over which I have walked in many midnights, when the old house listened to the snarl of the wind.

I ride on the clinking rails, and my eyes wait for elegies bright as a spring morning in New York.

Metallic fairy tales fill my space, the frontiers crackle into ashes, the voices which burst through darkness are mute.

New in my hands is hope, and love pulsing around the zodiac drinks the tears of the humble women in the city streets.

I am on my way to the asphalt, where acrobats move before the verb, and I leave behind the trance of afternoons strange with explosions of silence.

O tantum ergo of winged dusk !

The forests still dream into bells, into herb, into humming, into sun and listen to magical fugues.

Villages surge up, gabled and grey, with belfries rearing evangels into the bluest skies.

But the wheels beat time to our desires and to the kyrie eleison of concrete.

Subway trains smashing into trembling stations echo in my mind with the chant of a huge city by the sea.

The prison moves staccato into the desert of stone.

And soon we will see glint over roofs, over avenues, over motors, over cathedrals, over nights anarchic with dreams.

And we will go through sleep towards phantom halls to a love past understanding.

II.

We slink through a sleeping town and the walls of the old houses suddenly rise into pallor.. I've gotta love that girl till I die.

Do not lean over the parapet, my hermetic friends : The antelope drifts across the fields seeking the cavern of vanished secrets.

The villages are mute with soliloquies. So let us sail, the forests whip around us, the eyes of the hare are broken.

Hold high your head, my lady, a baboon wings towards you, indolent swoon of the knees. Are we alone again?

The slope withers with heather. The acre steams. What clusters about the vagabond who gazes at the convulsions of the locomotive?

Light comes ringing from invisible beatitudes.

I remember the milltown in snow-storms and a girl beside me, weeping.....

The road is a disk, the sheep turn on the effigies, I cry over the whir of agonizing monotones. Shall we take the clockwork apart again?

Keep silence, diadem! The letter was a lie. Our enemies crouch in the half-light of the distant street-lamp.

The old man standing in the doorway of his stable nods into autumn. The church is a dark signal.

The telegraph poles sing like a sirocco, shutters enclose dreams, the fetish shrieks in the shadows.

Birds lie crushed in the road through which the last pilgrim passed so long ago, and where the gipsy wagon tarries in the gloom.

I have hated too much in the darkness of my solitude.

III.

The bells have ceased their tinkle and the cargo stirs in the casks and barrels, where the miles illuminate our vision.

How long will you be here, moon-glistering dynamo?

The Corn-Mother weeps in the nearby fields. The wings of my sadness flew over chimney-pots and huts, and the oil-lamp swaled.

Winds come down the road-bed sniffing the carcass of the dog. I am haggard from mould of silences.

The tracks are sharp as sickles and the cassocked skeletons wander down the field-path, and the girls hold tryst with the dusk.

An old man wanders up and down the platform, it is so lonely here, the young girl gets on board to tempt the lights of the boulevards.

The station-master winks at his wife, and hunters carrying mutilated deer stare down the tracks.

We race through a luminous foam, and the clock ticks off the minutes with a whimper.

The kermesse ends in a din, all the men and women stop their smiles, the cafés grow dark.

Why do I think of Coney Island hot with an afternoon in July and the wet skins of the East-Side women dripping in the sand?

Paradise stops its music. Black animals crawl through the trees. The flight of blossoms cries.

Listen to the incantations on the road! The honeycombs have disintegrated, and the offerings are in vain.

The stories go on in the child's sleep endless like a rosary mumbling.

We stand before a cannonade and night is Vitzliputzli waiting for sacrifice.

Again that sound of waters rushing through the locks.

Again the interplanetary speed.

IV.

There is no more talk. All the mouths are pinched with waiting. These brains are filled with brothels, electric signs, rack of streets.

Nearer we come to the conflagrations. Lightning will strike in the sky of the sorrows.

Where are you going, strangers and friends, your eyes are fatigued and your bags lie rotting in the sinister cabal.

You have never known the liberty I cried for, when the night came roaring out of nowhere, and the landscape fled from the lanterns.

The wheels click-click through the plains, the tracks are mutilated with destinies, the sod smokes with insects.

A woman yawns, her teeth are filled with maggots. The stalks on the stubblefields nod with fear. We are also afraid.

In a Paris café I met a green-eyed woman who smiled into the absynthe shimmer of her memories. A song lay dead on her lips.

We are prisoners straining away from dementia, and our hearts beat for the adventures of the straits of Zoolibar.

Smile, damn you, smile, the plain is in panic.

For life is still a grave, a pine-forest, a crow, a gipsy, a requiem, while we wing towards the east.

We look once more at the prophecy of a crucifixion.

And a city waits for us with gifts more luminous than tropical forests.

V.

I am a dream-man in a chaos.

Rain shakes the windows, as I watch the tortured beings waste into decay....

Chase yourself, little specter of the night !

The air quakes with the echoes of the bombs which the stars shot down.

Our loneliness is more terrible than that of a prison. If I should shout, no one would hear my voice, and my words would come back scorched iuto shame.

The movement of the cars piling up into distorted pyramids crashes against the evanescent twilight.

How strange it was, landing in Brooklyn one winter dusk, as the bridges swung their cables over the sea-hungry river!

Faces sink against me like gulls, grey faces and cancerous cheeks, and lovely roses of girls.

Come into me, rigid dream, and stay with me! Feet clack into the mythos of my wonderings. And always the monotone of the wheels.

I am no longer a man of flesh and bone. I go bursting into the moving space fogging itself around me.

I go singing into the smoke and hurl myself into visionary expectancies. The sighs of the palm-trees are far away.

Lonely sky falls over my eyes, and the forchead of the voyager reeks against my hands.

Immense will be the witches' sabbath bringing the demented guitars and the seven wonders of the world.

VI.

Again the violets at the dress of the first love.

I watch an old town float by, the swallows have nested there and a nomad, atlantic-weary, wondered over a dream.

The tempest of the organ foams against me, the hymns light the dictatorships. I am in the shadow of leaves.

O the Chicago nights, when the lake cried with gulls and steamer-sirens, and smoke spiraling around the skyscrapers hid barbaric mysteries.

Let me go with your druid harps, o wide-eyed woman, there is nothing for you in the forests of my remembrance.

But what about the continental tank-towns?

At night the burghers sit in the smoking cafés and drink beer and talk about the mayor of Phenomena or the women of lurid streets.

I knew the greatest acrobat in Marsinia, says the sheriff, and the women—they had the goods....

I fought the panther in the jungles of Meylon, says the notary, and I had ten wives on the island of Laboa, where they crowned me king and killed fifty slaves each year on my birthday....

Jean, the old gardener with the iron-grey hair and the yellow teeth, nods his head. He has never missed a day at the Café du Commerce.

The wife of the inn-keeper smiles softly into the yellow haze, and strokes the cat and reads a novel.

Once a year a drunk is dragged to the police-station next door and locked up for the night.

The hours come dripping with sleep, the lanterns flare their torches, the townhouse-clock thunders into an atrocious silence.

VII.

Now hunger sobs in every nerve.

Green whorls dance before my eyes, my vices, my graces, my silver sleep.

I had forgotten that voices come with electric lights.

I remember an old voyage across the Atlantic, when the columbiad cried and a white city loomed immensely.

What did they say, the giant posters which I saw in the myth of my becoming?

I went in a dogma of solitude through the deserts of light, where men and women lingered over the liturgies of their thirst.

Dusk sickered against the facades of high houses and the owl sought an audience with the new moon.

When the bandit was tired, he left the gamblers and his woman cried over a vanished garden, over a dead nightingale, over a meadow, where the fays walk into a midnight trance.

And there was fatigue in every muscle, in every song that went through orgies, through gutters, through the gibberish of despair.

I would burst the continents and race across seas and over mountains, to islands, where silence broods over coral-reefs, to villages where drums gore the darkness of alleys, to houses where women lie on matted straw singing to fetishes with occult voices.

Go to it, dynamic cinema of my hopes :

Must I always stand at a window and cry for explosions, for earthquakes, for volcanoes, for unrest and dying, when the sun slants copper into a stranger's eyes ?

VIII.

The white city cries to me : "Roses will bloom no longer in the adulterous sun".

At the edge of the fleeing houses, the miracles are clustered, and we will be strangers to the loam.

Bird song is strangled by the roar of the wheels, the horses flee to the tumult of the silver bugs and the willows stir with hysteria.

All the acres gleam with the dying sun.

I have had friends with whom I roamed, singing, through old-world mountains, when the wine concealed their calvary.

Now seed flutters through the air from the hands of a solitary, and the rhythm is like the movement of a gentle old woman's hands.

Crows melt into the horizon and die in flame and thoughts float to a suicide.

The algae I found at Havre brought messages from the deep sea explorers who had been silent many years.

Cough up, locomotive, I am losing patience.

There are castles on hills of crystal whence come voices like blood oozing from a heart wound and whence come dead memories swathed in the whiteness of a full moon.

My city waits with its constructions and we plunge towards the revolution of its myriad life.

IX.

We will see the new world nebular-white with the magnificent explosion in the brambles of the stars.

The shock will be a sonata scherzoing into the themes of the most evanescent space.

Our destinies are tangled here on this singing train, beat down the invisible wall, companions of speed.

We will stand rooted before the integrities of strange visitors.

The wishes of a buried childhood will be resurrected in the shimmer of the hours and the song of the nostalgic missal.

We will dance, disembodied, down the milky road that leads into the forest of fire, where the ecstatic songsters live.

Savage men will chant on drifting canoes, and the swans will offer their breasts to the arrows of the celestial lovers.

We will stand in spring and the balsamic hearts of the wanderers will reflect the streams of the world.

We will demolish the ring of the earth-bound. We will shout the annunciation of the liberating roundelay.

Down silver ravines angelic apparitions will fly with the ciborium of a smile, and the massacre will only cease in the luminousness of an electric god.

X.

Flash of light circles blue against my window, the recitative of the wheels slows down, the legends spiral into faith.

We thunder into the lighted station, the city glides into flamingoes, we are in the year 2,000.

We are in the golden year, o singing mutation, banquet of the drunken festival !

FLIGHT INTO GEOGRAPHY
A SCENARIO

Scene I.

HARBOR. November fog bears paroxysm of thoughts. Emigrant youth and Father stand on pier near transatlantic boat.

YOUTH : Song will come into me.
FATHER : Life flows to billows.
YOUTH : Chant of my muscles !
FATHER : Sunken lyric of my hopes !
YOUTH : I shall tear the fog.
FATHER : Decay celebrates orgies.
YOUTH : O leafless trees of your hills !
FATHER : Visions sink into spooks.
YOUTH : Savagery burns sadness.
FATHER : Grind feet into earth.
YOUTH : Revolt will blossom on my road.
FATHER : We stand in eternal contours.

YOUTH : Doubts fall from me like words.
FATHER : The sun never waits.
YOUTH : Darkness may come, but I smile.
FATHER : Flesh snares the blind.
YOUTH : I dream of giant cities.
FATHER : Your mother weeps at home.
YOUTH : My blood waits for gongs and hymns of a divine one against steel.

SCENE II.

On deck. Coast of Europe sinks into an abstraction. Passengers cluster in a panic. Boat plunges through darkening waves.

Original sin. Fatigue. Philosophy brings wisdom. Electric moons. Nostalgia cries requiem over boyhood. Orang-Outang. Hate brews Saturn. Bleed into problems. Body cries towards relief. Explosion of lyrics. Hieroglyphics emerge. Autumn leaves flamed to death. Smell of brine in my nostrils. Nomad !

I shall find moon-drunken dialogues in morning hours. There will be white pilgrimages across steaming hills. I will be a vagabond, a missionary, a farmer, a singsong, a man of gold. My unrest will whip me to visions of cast-iron beams at sundown. The last reliquy is hidden in a ballad.

O infinity of waters, my chronicles of monstrous expectations !

Storm.... Storm !

Scene III.

He meets another passenger on deck. The stranger is an elderly man who returns to America after a visit to his home town he had left twenty years before.

Youth : The ship sleeps.
Stranger : Going to New York ?
Youth : Adventure burns.
Stranger : The Devil !
Youth : Tell me of Newland.
Stranger : The asphalt is hard.
Youth : Wonders bloom everywhere.
Stranger : Ho ! Ho ! Ho !

Scene IV.

Youth with girl passenger wanders down the deck. She is a peasant and wears a colored scarf around black hair. Gulls flop in the wind, and dusk melts against the boat.

Youth : Goddess !
Girl : I ?
Youth : Elegy of earth.

GIRL : Poor folk.
YOUTH : Elegy of earth.
GIRL : Hunger.
YOUTH : And now ?
GIRL : Work of hands.
YOUTH : Riddles of Newland.
GIRL : Alone in world.
YOUTH : Pilgrim to dance.
GIRL : Gleam of cities.
YOUTH : Drug memories.
GIRL : Far loved ones.
YOUTH : Dreamers all.

SCENE V.

Boat steams up the bay into the Hudson. White looms forest of skyscraper. Pulses whir and eyes stare feverishly, as immigrants stand on deck in a paralysis of wonder.

I am an alien against the reality of magic. You are beautiful, stone-steel, electric cosmos whirling towards me. I hunger for the metallic blue flower blossoming on your asphalt.

Your sky is an azure maddening with purity. Back of this wall your millions dance in the fire of their drunkenness. Far away I leave the quietism of the old world, its chaos, its darkness.

Scene VI.

He dreams : Giants march, heavy-footed, through the canyons of the city. Their voices shrill like machines. A gigantic girl, dressed pneumatically, picks him up, places him in her apron, and carries him off to her concrete cliffs.

He awakes, shrieking, in his hotel room, where rats scuttle about his bed.

Scene VII.

Catacombs of the city. Nineveh trembles with tomtom of rivets. Dynamoes whir against time... perpetuum mobile of hungers. Space passes into monologues.

His diary : Unrest. Evening. Electric ads. Torches. On roof of apartment house. Wishes fade in air. Marionettes stalk below. Postulant before enigma of city. Plunge into the rotation of wheels ! Go, fear, lacerate yourself in liberty of hammers ! Blaze, heart, from out of agony into song ! Walk into the liturgy of the moment and drink in music of iron hours !

Scene VIII.

Elevated noise is like hand of surgeon disintegrating nerves. Movement in panic. Winter wind freezes bones. He works with other immigrants in warehouse.

YOUTH : Ache of muscles.
COMPANION : Money talks.
YOUTH : Sonatas of steel.
COMPANION : Get rich.
YOUTH : Lies. Lies.
COMPANION : There are whorehouses.
YOUTH : Fugitive from revolution.
COMPANION : Hey there ! Work !

SCENE IX.

Crowd. Houses lean against moving mass. He hurries through streets and over bridges.

Loneliness cries lamento. Blossoms of girls. Syllables are shattered. There is a scream of rememberings. Everywhere seeking after electric stars, mechanical hours, convulsive motions. Where is the static point in the luminous flux ?

Metallic flamingoes flutter into evening sky.

SCENE X.

Basement. Shelter from day amid vermin and rats. He lies ill. Lone new friend arrives. Spring night blooms outside into barbaric delirium.

FRIEND : Better this than work.
YOUTH : These silences are hunger.
FRIEND : Lost job again.
YOUTH : Miracles are gone.

FRIEND : Nothing in sight.
YOUTH : Primula Veris at home.
FRIEND : Was doctor here ?
YOUTH : I have resignation.
FRIEND : God is injust.
YOUTH : Light. Darkness.
FRIEND : Death helps.
YOUTH : I want life.

SCENE XI.

He is in his room reading newspapers for job. Landlady enters.

SHE : You'll have to go.
HE : I have nothing.
SHE : Someone wants your room.
HE : One more night ?
SHE : I need the money.
HE : Pity !

She puts his suitcase in front of door. Palely he goes.

SCENE XII.

He sleeps in park. Wakes up as sun shines in his face.

Cruel city, city of gold, I salute you ! You tumble over me into trances of the moment, but

I will always be hungry for new springs. Misery of my heart — gifts of white thoughts wait. I am vainly expectant, tramping plains of stone.

Stranger nearby awakes.

STRANGER : What are you waiting for ?
YOUTH : Infinity.
STRANGER : You seek vain things.
YOUTH : Forgetting.
STRANGER : Is a God in you ?
YOUTH : Demons.
STRANGER : The winds of the hills sweep clean.
YOUTH : Brothels.
STRANGER : Listen to the Lamb !
YOUTH : I spit.
STRANGER : Prayers heal.
YOUTH : Sleep.
STRANGER : Do not desire.
YOUTH : Only life.
STRANGER : Are you hungry ?
YOUTH : For barbarian words.
STRANGER : Songs wait like sacraments.
YOUTH : And spring.
STRANGER : New light is near.
YOUTH : Crumbs of bread !

Scene XIII.

Seated on bench of Battery Park, he watches steamship leave for Europe.

The fables died in Gomorrha. O ritournelle of gables ! Crooked streets orphic with dreams ! Sacramental silence calls against blaspheming dusks, and the prairie of the mind lingers in a ruined spring. I dreamed a cemetery far away. The wind whipped the evergreen, and I awoke in tears. The gulls cry their jubilee, and the tugs ride to adventures. Memory bleeds my heart into the humility of a sunken star. The fairy tales have lied.

Scene XIV.

He walks through the streets, exile and pariah, waiting for franciscan words. To go — always to go ! Beyond the roofs of the towering houses to the absolute, to the renunciation of the disinherited !

Then he finds work again, and his hands are mangled in monotones of wheels.

Scene XV.

Afternoon. Girls walk past him, crying towards him their anonymous desires.

Kolibri and wild plums. Storm in his heart. Smell of earth again, and silent nights.

Plunging into the cataract of noises, I am a child, a stammering, a dissolving substantiality. When the prairie stands pregnant, and the churches thunder wings, my shoulders heave into a waiting. My eyes hungergnaw wishes — mouths distorted with lust. The silhouette of my hope darkles like a bat. This seeking brews in every nerve, and I cry for a word pouring from drunken lips.

Scene XVI.

O stoic transformations ! O wonderbird, loneliness for glamour and ecstasy !

He spits against the stars.

He stands alone, Everywhere his home and nowhere, bitterness of the world in his heart.

ELYSIAN INVENTION
A SCENARIO

ROOM overlooking winding drive. Winter-storm blasts against building. Student, watching moon-glint over barges on river, dream-listens at dormer-window.

The planet has come and gone... One last word, breaking into shivers, is over me revelation. Out of slime I have come, dark messenger of damned-up youth, hungry for unearthy moments, and the singing of the sonata listened to the trailing robes, to the hours of stalactites in swirl. The forest of rock holds the fugitives, and the fruits of the earth die rotting nearby. What was it the grapes revealed ? Always the treason of the women grew, the houses became ill with miasmata of basements, the river plain knew no longer the vocal sky.

Night ferments. I lost it again. It had a voice that was the immense chaos. It was a blue litany of Our Lady of Fever. It was the tinkle in the throat of the child, o sound of the mysterious

space ! It was also white and pale like the face of a harlequin under the shrill electric light. It came when my eyes were closed, and I heard only so many pulses sickering into conquests....

People walk mechanically on asphalt.

Street-car pulls brakes.

A ferry-boat screams.

Clacking feet dance epileptically in dance-halls..

Stuttering of automobiles.

Voices gloom in police-station.

Radios, electric bulbs, wheels, lamps, dynamoes, perform rumba in store.

Bells tinkle.

Woman in Children's Hour : "Once upon a time there was a little boy named Hop o' My Thumb..."

Rumble of aeroplane overhead.

Wind blasting down the street. Flutter of newspapers.

Sirens shriek in staccato rhythm.

Tambourines of Salvation Army.

Bullets whiz in hold-up.

Newsboy : "Extra ! Extra !...."

Babbling of drunk.

Now I no longer wonder about the red mouths nor about the convulsive songs. The rage for living is over me, while the dogs in the far-off villages begin their lunar bark, and the owls cry into the ivy. Over-sounds languish tangled about

me. The phantom throats are in the offing.

Jazzband howls jungles.

Hurdy-gurdy.

Voice of speaker : "Our candidate has risen from the ranks. His understanding of the problems of philosophy, relativity, geography, political economy, thomism, idealism, realism, neo-realism, leninism, americanism, and cubism makes him the peerless choice of the Republic..."

Percussive applause.

Station thunders with trains.

Dialogues on street.

The harvest flamed against my renunciations, and the wind that sang down the rags of our chords, brought a woman's step, shimmer of a circus, fugue of the infinite. The sound goes steel-like through my brain. It is a deep-throated, eerie sound and seems to melt into the element of the absolute. The fetish-men shrill in the mountains, and the victim struggles in the cords. Immense will be the crop of corn.

Music by movie-orchestra. Indian love-song heard in snatches.

Perpetuum Mobile is in the air.

Comets roar and hiss.

Lions grumble in Zoo.

Microbes sing.

Tympani grunt.

Electric waves crackle.

Voices sob at death-bed of mangled laborer.

Hoarse voices emerge fortissimo from dive.

Bridge whines in piers.

Editorial Office of Daily Times : "Reporter at telephone : ".... Right.... Joseph Mundo, 31, 919 Pacific Street, shot killed by two men cross-fire bullets... yes... Bergen Street... Mundo bootlegger beer-runner feud... rival racketeers... Righto..." Many voices in room. "Boy !... Copyboy !" ...Telephone jingles... Hello !... Hello !... Hello !... Yes... Louder, please... Hello !... Right... Black wanted at telephone. Black.....

Agitator at street-corner : "... And in order that the workers get final justice, they must capture the machines of the masters... The day of the revolution..."

Again the over-voice ! It has assumed the chaste beauty of a sonata by Haydn. Now it pronounces slowly words that have the rhythm of Dante's Vita Nuova, the Jesuslieder of Novalis, the Songs of Innocence of Blake. No voice on earth has ever equalled it for purity of color. For a long time it has swayed over the chaos of the city. But always there is a crying in me, a shriek for something beyond the stone, that waits with monstruous eyes of red, that hides the demon in the memory of the mountain. Death is in the

road of dust, in the quadrille of the fusiliers, in the romance of saturn.

Human herd crashes into wail.

Voices from Psychiatric Ward at Mercy Hospital : "...I've bought Wall-Street. Look at these billions and billions of dollars. Here's a billion for you, and you, and you... They're coming after me again... The bulls are coming... Now I lay me down to sleep..."

Groans of love in hotel-room.

The city begins to snore. A rhythmic sound, sinister and uniform.

Screams of woman being murdered in flat.

Player piano in dive. Confused voices of men and women.

The fear that is in me comes on tip-toe, when the sleep scuttles over the roofs. The candle-light flickers and the river-rats shoot cannily over the garret-floor, where the spiders have built their witching chapels. The advance of the beasts of night darkens the last words of the love I have been wondering at with open eyes. The manichean indian comes with supernatural gestures, and the voice has become a hymn. It flows into a thundering evocation lunging out of time and space into a miraculous adventure beyond the roofs. Flesh and bones fall from me, and I am one with you, o universal law !

FAULA AND FLONA

I.

THE lilygushes ring and ting a bilbell in the ivilee. Libephools sart slingslang in the clish of sun. The pool dries must. The loreley-bird loors in meaves. The sardinewing flurs flar and mere. A plutocrass with throat of steel. Long shills the mellohoolooloo. The rangomane clanks jungling flight. The elegoat mickmecks and crools. A rabotick ringrangs the stam. The flishflashfling hoos and haas. Then lurr the meadowcalif's routs. The hedgeking gloos. And matemaids sholl for dartalays.

II.

The loorabalboli glides through the algroves suddenly turning upon itself. There is a spiral spatter of silver. A thunderbelt lies in white.

The rolls drum down the hidden malvines, where the gullinghales flap finwings casually. The feathers of the salibri glint in the marlite. Then the loorabalboli sings : "O puppets of the eremites, the weed-maids fever love. Send Octobus to shores of clay ; thieve younglings out of sheaves of ice." And troutroots dance. There is a blish. A wonderlope whirs through the floom.

III.

Swilswalsangola is dead. The loolamins ring-mourn and wine. The songster of the netherland lies rim and raam. In damples lies he mathed and clayed. The valleys undate from the fifes which sadsquirch in a boundemay. Six thousand sangomaids zoon in the wooze. They dance a kliklikla a drilladooo. O dizzy wilderness of pound. The klingklings smish. The flutloots hill. The frightened argunauts dipleap. O deep. Meer-lasses shy. A silence lopes with fear and bleer.

IV.

Floot ondiwaves in meermess keel. The mareeds pend and flitterflir. The swillows swoosh. Saltroses glee. Leviatone curds showm and moor. A marrousel bersekers angst. From shlamm and

shlummer behemoth. A roar. A grishe. A brum. A krach. Blood ozzles in the flutshilf road. The cartilages clink and clook. Leviatone is rocked and ripped. The moolagingala flees grell with fear. The rulleys rool and molt in lide. Reel herringmere. The wooze lies halt with flack of bones. A flick of shells. Storm brills with poonik down the moar.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE ENIGMA

O you, goddess of our nights and days, myth-hungry life in the blue dawns of the ages, motley visitor from the unknown forests, I salute you!

I met you in the landscape of a river, where the wine flowed in baroque glasses. Over the villages hung the silver mist, and the bells sang the confidence of a world beginning. Luminous were the eyes in the day that sank with words stammering laughter. You were a great star over my father's house, you were a comet flashing down the milky lanes, you were an asteroïd going its multiple way through the brambles of the clouds.

I met you in the days of growing, when the blood was a delirium. Gloriously you danced before me, while the steaming houses leaned into the woman's hand. It was a plunge into the

deepest river I have known. It was a lunging into the widest savannah, where the night had harbored the last silences. When midnight wandered over the horizons, there came a magnificent animal that leapt to the glinting water.

I met you, when the night was steel. The metallic birds fluttered over the steam of the roofs, and the city was a litany of endless marvels. Immense was the darkness in me, when you came, and the bitter root was in my mouth. But you changed the day into night, and night into day, and the shadows whirled about us astrally. The gates of the fable crashed open, o you, my glistering companion, my last hope in judgment days. Overthrowing the black order of the columns, you led me over the smoking ruins of the wildest hall of color, and you called the supernatural beings who had been hiding in the niches of the corridors. My blood tatooed a percussion, and the odes shrilled angelically in the invisible. The dance began. O ritual of the weeping damned, o liturgy of the wide-eyed rebels! The cars of steel burnt into the rails like rain.

I met you, when the room burnt with the chant of my obsessions. The girl looked into the chimney-fire, and saw the soft hands and the fruits that roasted in the savage flame. Over her eyes you placed the blue mist of the oil, and the

wounds of the lacerated words healed in the whir of the circus. What was it we caressed ? Drunk with the poppy of your gifts, we floated to the loneliness of the autumnal sleep. Age-old sagas drifted down the fever, but the night was purple with a sonata.

I met you, when the rebellion blazed in the secret streets. All the reflections died in the darkling tear of eternity, and the plants of the subterranean gardens nodded into a semi-sleep. What was it we were waiting for ? The crowd crashing against the murmuring idea had no longer the Sabbath voice. The lonely died in madness. Greying the women held the children upon the heads of the savages. Words became stone. Silence fled into a utopia that fluttered over the bare heads of the dreamers who had awakened from the nightmare. The moon grew into dark stuttering. Suddenly before the liberated ones there arose the silhouette. The river had washed down the tears. The new moon stood sorrowless in the white glint of the lanterns.

I met you, when the world went crashing into the skeleton of crystals : Space blued into a bridge of chants. The stranger brought your messages which made possible the tremendous transformations in the night. O deepest mysteries, have I no longer the farewell word ? The water

was phosphorescent, and the prophetess stood on the bank humming softly into the stars. The magician came and hacked to pieces the statues on the market-place and strangled the dusty throats of the lightshy walkers. Languages melted into the universe that was the omnipotence of a beloved midnight. The wheels sped through the half-shadows, and the pallid man's irony died in the blessedness of the struggle. Alone ? Never was the celestial roundelay more tangled with time.

I met you with the pilgrim in the sunset of the new continent. His voice wandering down a river said : "The polar ice has a strange depth in which the blue dolphins dance rumbas. The esquimo has mastered the universe, and repents his crimes in the aurora borealis. The women burn in the black mass of the mirrors. They sing : 'Your hands are tortures, men of ice, the child lies in the contact of the snows !' Waves came electric from far deserts, where wolves are waiting for the pestilential ruck of the bodies. Would I be alone ? I have gone begging on the country roads, and the women have thrown stones at me. I have gone singing through summershadowed forests and the deer have watched me cut the girl's body to pieces. The guardian angel watched over her, and she arose out of the ashes into which I had

hurled her, white as snow, shimmering into a knife of laughter. I slept along the willows of the yellow river, and the man who approached from the mills was clad in rags. He held the night aloft with his fingers and cried : 'The balance will not come back, o midnight man, there is a madness in the prey that sweeps over the water.' When he stopped, I noticed a star flaming on his forehead. It crackled into dawn. The face of the woman stood out from the sheaves. An evangel in her arms. The narration became interlaced with the philosophy of her mood : 'No country has failed to see me. The frontiers stand still, when they hear my steps. I tear down the last vestiges of historic mortality. I abandon humbly the separations.' I have also gone stamping through the city that has no name. The glint of the blizzard threw me into a delirium. There was a house, where the impetuous youths stood before the voyages. An anguish was on the faces of the planes. Here I found the girl who had strangled her child. She broke the jar in which the wine had glowed. 'No nightingale will ever sing again,' she said. But the uniforms glittered and gloomed. The thief stood abashed in the corner, and I could not keep my eyes from his. What could I do ! So much there is we have forgotten in the night."

I met you with the stranger who knew Tchinnis-Khan. He said : "The atlas gives healing balm, when the heart is tired and the brain is fatigued. I found the submarine colors in the stigmata of the dead rebels. In the brush there is still the translucent love that fled from the terracces. The epitaphs stand grey in the rain that beats against the withered church. But the kermesse nearby builds its monuments of ivy song, while the biographies wait. The world emerges huge out of the brains of peacocks. Once I wandered through Thule, where the sun had held at bay the deepest mystery. The young girl threw away the veil which the landscape had hurled in its message of wind, and the nudity of her flesh mangled the shameful quails. The street-lamps fumed in the poem of a fever. But she said : 'It is ineffacable, the word, that came from the sea. Once it knocked at the window of my sleeping room, and rushed with trembling hands into the whiteness of my bed. It brought the wound of disquiet. What could I do ? The nights began to bleed more than the dusks had ever done. The clock struck the faith of eternity. Then the lines collapsed in the moon cloud and the seizure of the visitor was horrible to see. The drunken dream rescued the pilgrim's planet. There were reprisals in the streets, and the invincible isolation

grew fatigued. The turbines echoed from the boats that were at anchor in the port.' 'Tomorrow', I said, 'the big steamer will leave the wine and the secret passages, and the penguins will be quiet again.'

"Will we always stand still in the savage reflection of our phantoms?" I asked.

"Lovers have no time to waste," said the stranger. "In the tents of the desert there are women who have discovered the enigmas which the mechanical magicians tried to hide. Is it my loss that the explosives were in the masts of the steamer ? Once I found the dance of the dark women bursting into the vision of my starlight. They wound their bellies through the long, long night, while the fetishes stood static before the drunken baal. The magic assassination of the shadows grew into an orgy of inauguration. The silk was mutilated in the marriage of grass and clay. The famine was over. Children died in the mutiny that followed the debauch, and the blood was beautiful to see in the dawn's blue. Our caravan stood petrified before the altars which smoked with the last victim, and the hoarse rattle of the drunken throats swung about us like wine. It was a calvary of the hippogriffs that had found their way from the antique underbrush. No one was troubled and although the eyes surged again

from the water, we wondered no longer. We were saved, alone of all the strangers. The traveler wrote in his diary : "Mystic Dance of Death ! " and let it go at that."

"And the other horizons ?" I asked.

"The tangled weed of the island hid the camp of the wonderful barbarians," the stranger replied. "The apes played with cocoons in the miraculous archipelago. The days were luxuriant explorations. Monologues dripped from the full moon, while the tumults remained at anchor far away in the wash of the surge. Here I believed in the tranquillity of warm breasts. The mirages were all about me, and the adventures modified my thirsts. The rare wines went singing through our blood. Wings of the most colorful birds threw against us the stupefaction of the wonderbound. And the fruits ? In the skirmishes of love they flew into the laps of the goddesses, golden as a harvest-moon. Once I was lost in the high grass, and only the screams of the parrots and the apes rent the silences. Torn was my clothing, and I wandered on, living on red berries and roots. When I came to the village the world had changed into the most shimmering blue. The tribe stood around me, and the women laved my lacerated body. The god of the aeon was with us, while the sun went down in the inexpressible

longing of the first thing. Away with philosophies, I cried. I will be alone in the jubilation of the eternal light, and the maroon burden of the dark shores will be forgotten. Rhythms poured over me, like purest crystal, and the heart remained first law. No warrior was I in the fantasia. But the voices sang about me music of cosmic clarifications."

"Hold on," I cried. "But the skeleton is steel."

"The blessed brothers and sisters found refuge in the wilderness of the dead craters. Our fever had been rising in the thundering days and the earth had become a raging flame. And we fled into the coolness, where the spirit sank into quiet. Here they fell down in the snow and prayed before the smoking columns of the spooks. They built viaducts over the huge glaciers, and the machines roared over immense stretches of snow. The brothers and sisters lived a long time amid the ice blossoms and the silences that uprooted the deepest secrets."

"What is the flight from decay?" I asked.

"Noon gathered all the senses. Down great rivers we canoed stricken with the life of the sun. Never was the earth more fruitful, and the nightmares were far away. Joyously rang the forest bells. The remembered insanity of the vanished race flew away from us. Here all was a vast

festival of the senses, and the sun healed our bruises. Dreaming was a cherubic singing in the tangle of the lichens. Every cavern held the mystery of the living dead. We were embedded in the fruits. Life sang with golden vibrations."

"And what of the real landscape?" I asked.

"In the year 2045 the continent will be transmuted," he said. "The great machines will build the world we could never hope for in our silent moments. The day will be a beloved woman in a silver night, o consolation of the miraculous possibilities! Men will have forgotten the conflagration of the nerves, and the obstacles will have found their death. The rosary will be broken. The wine of the antique saga will no longer ferment. There will be no longing for the violent death, and the messages of the unknown city will come on the ether of a lovely being in steel. The witches will dance on the shifting roofs and bow to the moon. Dynamoes will create revolutions in every heart."

O you, goddess of our nights and days, myth-hungry life in the blue dusk of the ages, wonder-bird of the approaching sleep, I salute you!

I met you on the boulevards, where your spell held the people in the vagabondage of their desires. You flashed into a poem, when the bedraggled outcast loosed the movements of the

great humanity which his sadness was hiding from the nepmen. The dark room was a fairy tale in hard fragments. You brought to me the gift of the new century, divine affirmer, sirocco of electricity, pulsing of radio, express train, cinema, television! O category of secret terminations! Immensely the world lies before me, x-rayed in every fibre of its cosmos. I am no longer alone, for the electric signs paint the nocturnal screen of my visions, and the wireless strangles time and space. O imagination of the new adventures, yours am I, dreamer awake in the sunlight of your feverish future!

You are with me now, while my summer dies in the yellowing sunset. Soon the house will see the doom of its ruins. The forests have hung their last guitars to the withered face of the rain-dim moon. I stand in the wine-sweet swale of the lamp. The child sleeps and the mother sings. The red leaves plucked from the hedges burn upon the table. Golden clink the glasses. A hymn decays in the spice of the white hair. The beasts in the forest are seized by fright. Even the serpent creeps into the russet shadows and the wild boar silences the orphans. The wind is a deep moan. All the peasants have put out the light, but the bark of the dogs is the annunciation of the little boy's death. Winter knocks at the

door, and we pull the woolen firmer over our shoulders, while sitting before the fire that flickers in the storm. A fairy tale tip-toes through the room, and the last bee lost in the house stands bewitched before the white mass. The sea is so far. Now we wait for the miracle that is over-due, and the slow song of the visionary birds in the rain-washed eaves will accompany the sleep that is more luminous than death.

Darkness washing clean the arteries surges to a flutter of wings. Where am I shadowed in this loneliness that stands around me a stranger with blows in the distance, while the wind taps at the hour-glass ? Slowly the minutes go to the verb, and the music in my ears comes with a buzzing of many insects and the noises on the floor. Rats play in the garret above, while the rain drip-drops into muteness, and the gold of the flute is so very distant. What plays before my eyes that is like cities in rain of dusks, that is like minarets lifting from the foam of beaches, that is like faces I have forgotten, many faces deformed into one, that is nuns dancing with poppies in their mouths, that is wheat bowing before the wind ? And in my ears there are huge bells crashing into summer sunday mornings in sleepy cities, they are folk-songs from throats of girls, they are fire tocsins, they are moans of dying men, they are whisper-

ings of strangers in unfamiliar suburbs. The world is breaking into bits, o throbbing occupation, and the earth floats towards a sphinx of insanity, towards an abyss of storm, towards a deep, deep forgetting.

I have become a giant bird. I fly through the swarming haze in which an aeroplane whirs to destruction. Some one laughs o horrible laugh.

Her breathing is the slow tick of the seconds. The words of the earth are being swallowed up by the demons that lie crouching in the far corner and burn electric holes into the shivering chaos. We are near to death in the last intoxication of the senses. I watch her helpless before the onslaught of your armies of the invisible. This is the dance of the ultimate enigma. Suddenly we will see the march of the grey automata who look for the door opening to bewitchments in the enchanted forests. The hot brow is cooler and the hands lie waiting for Christmas gifts. In the presses the little gods are hanged, while the advent of the blue scholars is announced by the whistling in the ivy. There is a fear that comes near my temples, while the oracles float over the effigies of the hungry, and the trees change to atlantic waves, and the floors creak with the footsteps of the magical traveler. The atrocities will come like belated butterflies.

And suddenly the candle flames to light the gethsemane of the thoughts that germ whimperingly in the flutter of the moths and windroaring fatigue. Clearer rises the plaint and the holiday of the heart waits in the mysteries of the home words that sink into blossoming hours. I have no name. The yellow fog swarms around my solitude, and the miner's lamp, drunk with corn, has lost the shining sorrow of the dripping shaft. Softly I glide with the dying flame into the bay of the glowing berries and the shadows stand giant around me warding off the oppression of the panting gods.

A face comes mutilated by tears, while the shoulders broken by silence burn into the red blessedness of the deserted night. Lightswirling river flows to the chanting word which embraces the may-fable of a death, incarnation of wonder, garden of the fever-woman. The branches hold the ribbons of her hair, and the retreat ends in the rout of the traces of fire which you left in the asphalt days. Insomnia grips the lamp, and the martyred eyes seek once more the sickle that was hanging in the barn, when the stranger came to bring the veils. Is there no ear to listen to the hallucinated words that blossomed from a forgotten beach, where the canoe crashed against the foamstrewn mussels? Slowly a voice sickers

into space, and a distant door creaks in the wind and my body sinks lower and lower into the luminous whirl of your stories.

Tenderness unrolls the map of the world, and the voyages you prescribe are more magical than the orchidean night I remember, while the bird sings automatic enchantment. Beautiful is the train running into the unknown city at night, when the electric globes crash into the darkness of the alley-way, and the rebus looms with colored wings. Always you are near me, o wonderbird, and the nomad seeks the farthest island in the bluest ocean, and the fugitive races over drenched acres. Your eyes closed in the magnificent slumber are following me through the tangled lianae in the forests, where the flamingoes fly to the mutinies. The little craft floats down the river. Sunshine blinds me and heals, as the room turns on its axis, and the bat flaps against the barred window that should hold the phantoms away.

Slowly I drift with you into the beautiful cave, where the women lie amid the crystal and the gold, and where the hot wine flows from humid casks. A swarm of voices comes from underground waters that rush to the dials of the hidden island. The frail bark rocks on the river toward the divinity that must be a woman's face aureoled by the great terror. Down, down go the fishermen

to the sea, and the nets are silvery in the rain of dawn, and the violences are veiled beneath the algae. Always the balances descend into the roots, and the shoal water floods the fury, and the virtues stop in their tracks. Down, down, I go to the fetishes, to the effigies, to the nenuphars, to the drug of the morning.

They float between waking and sleeping, the wonder words, they whir into nebular swarms, and strike my eyes with fiery hands. I grasp the bronze body of midnight, but the diamonds hold a conspiracy in the embrace of the disenchanted rages, and the nudity of the wintry laughter. The menace of the humid meadow frequents my presences, and the scapular loses the illusion which the blond sisters have been spreading here. I am swimming in the cloud of my concave world, where the body is no longer a weight, and where messages are sent by wireless to the farthest ends. The hermit finds the silences in the southern forests, and all the gates go open, while a sacred mother looks at tattered flags and dusty almanachs.

O comrade of my hours, dictatorial imagination, the miracle is over me, enigma of the earth.

This is the deepest peace the centuries have given, and the minutes are held by angelic fingers in the ambush of the snowy mist that lingers in

the accents of the drapery. Now my arteries are confessionals, where sneers are laid on pale lips, and where drunken words are buried in the quietude of the integrities. I am alone with a thousand figures of the past, and their faces shine with the echoing shimmer of the red quarry. I am inundated with the waters of the night. And always the faint singing, the smell of the beams, the deep, deep intuition of speechless surrenderings !

DOCUMENT

THIS loam, carpathian-rearing and aeon-soaked, lies grape-ripe in the sun. Beetling nod the ages over me, creative echo of intuitions. and the scarlet wood has buried withered actions. I have bloomed around the three frontiers, prisoner of the blue explosion, the roof-tops have nodded philosophy, a comrade has brought the future laden with sparks. Solitude is a tunnel with nocturnal fog, and continents flash before my eyes. Belts of time rush through space. Often I have come back from my pilgrimages, bruised and hallucinated, and I have shut myself in from the words of doom. I am deep in questings, brooding I build my lies, my bones ache with a millenium. And yet I am so free. My eyes have set fire to the ogivals, and my hands have lacerated the static being. Near me I see animals waiting for death, the villages smoke with rotting, the birth-

right is lost in the dust. Once I ran through these streets, Novalis was the blond lord, inns lingered in centuries. Philosophy, he said, is homesickness, an urge to be everywhere. In the forests of Europe I have encountered the most baffling enigmas, and sagas old as slime in the epoch of the auerochs lingered about me. This loam, singing in stasis and metamorphosis, winds its mantle around the hunger-striker.

My mother is an old woman with snow in her hair. She bore me under Gemini shadowed by skyscrapers. I grew into the day amid the spawn of strangers and listened to the first rumblings of the industrial revolution. On the cliffs of the Indian river, my parents dreamed anarchic dreams, and crossed the ocean again in search of the ancient loam. My childhood blossomed in the shadow of a cathedral. Hunger for the absolute gnawed me, when blackbirds brought marvellous words of dusk, folk-songs sank out of star-dew, a gothic wind blew over aryan strings. I bit my teeth into the steaming soil, I dreamed over almanachs summer-heavy with litanies, I drank the swelling silences before the chemical sleep. But wolves crept around the border-acres. Steel clinked in midnight watches. Temples burst with panic. I was a thing of chance in a river-roar, a nameless animal tracked in snow, a

sunset in a ravine of clay. O conquest of the alien spring! Adolescence bloomed sap in my veins. I joined the pilgrims to the port, where the transatlantic sang its chants for the cubes. November blocked the fog, the elevated railroad rumbled, a city was born terribly before my eyes. Now I am in America, I said, the ruins are far away in the poppies, night trickles into my hands with myriad colors. But hunger came down pestilential court-yards, and I wounded my neurones in a loosening of humility. I was alone in the city, my heaven tumbled over me in numberless squares, I was an actor strutting on a baroque stage. What will become of me, I wondered, I loved advertising signs whirling electrically on Broadway, I loved the print of Mr. Pulitzer's paper, I loved the lithe women in the evening glint. Years sank into snow-clouds. Concrete massed its pathetic walls. I sank into a whiskey-dream.

The steel-city hammered the dialectics of the day. Spring came with its rebel girl, the furnace flames grew magical, the houses of the workers were transmuted into castles, the rivers flamed with our fire. Cruelly the milltown lumbered in the sooty fog. But it showed no mercy for the lost, its words were barbaric gutters. We were

alone. Then out of my heart came tenderest pity. Weeping I sank into the dust before the tortured men and women. I bound their wounds. Luminous love for the weak. I was brother to all, o holy humanity, my hours were dedication to your deepest rites. I saw them suffer, their eyes were wide with homesickness, their children wondered at the greying day. Raging went the tempo. Machines carried me along. I had no longer time to dream. I was hemmed in. It swirled around me, mass, darkening my joys, shrilled into the sonata of a fairy tale. The demiurge! Speed! Forward! One. Two. Three. Was I in step? I questioned my heart. It beat a furious rhythm. I have a long way to go, I said, am I ready to leave a beloved one? I shall go through tunnels and ravines, I shall ride in subways, I shall fly through the ether. Around me whirled the dance of Baal. Then came over me my other self. What is the thing that makes me destroy the loveliest essences? Moments reared when my fists clenched convulsively the throat of a man in a street-car, when my eyes burnt holes into a church, when I wanted to stab a girl to death. I saw the red stream of insurgence rushing down the years. But always I remained with the people I loved. A thousandfold their thoughts were in me. I watched the dance of the plutocrats

and their feet rotting into the age of jazz. O man of dust, lonely one in the city's desert, I said, I salute you : Huge fist waiting to smash your masters ! I sent my greeting to the man in the harvest fields who thought about God, to the man of love, to the man greying in the shops, to the man of the terrifying hours. You, I said, exiles, vermin, foreigners, you will come like monstruous locusts and swarm over your stolen acres and rescue the homeless and frail !

It is liberty, and liberty, and again my hunger is liberty. In the European city I found the dream moving in my sleep, I discovered the zoological gardens filled with unicorns, I met the poet scattering words on the boulevards. But the rooms were dusty with bric-a-brac, the norm beat its static measure, the Congo was no triumph. It is good to live here for a while, I said, my mind has opened all its windows, the step of the women is delirious on the asphalt. Yet slowly longing came avidly into me once more with mythic whisperings. The blizzards in New England, I said, tingle in the blood, the great lakes wash the dunes, Manahattan is a miracle, grainfields sway with hope, men grow into bronze giants, it is youth bursting like wheat, it is strength singing crudely over skyscrapers, it is joyousness of dawn.

The confusion of my heart grew like a tumor. No longer did the Orient hold me with its turgid hossannahs, I heard papooses in the night. The Gulf lured with blue bay and masts, I saw the trek of the pioneer, I saw tomorrow immensely over my midnights.

Bells clank noon over the furrows, grass genuflects at the edge of the forest, wine flames on the table. And over the world there comes a bloom, orphic sign of the supernatural, lure to the home of the blessed. I am so atrociously alone. But no longer do I care if men come filled with darkness. Alone in the wilderness I shall not bleed to death. I am waiting to move in the spell of my wishes. Alone I brew my magic. New world, miraculous humanity of my mind, I kneel before you, dusty refugee in my century's shambles!

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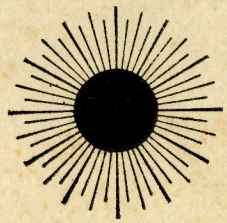

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